(1926)

Charleston

Dec 31

My Billy

Thankyou for your letter. I am sorry you have squandered all your visiting energies on Ka as I'm afraid quite miss Julian who might return to Paris on Tuesday - He is very much disappointed & so am I - as I hoped for a New Year party here - However, come when you can - any day next week as far as I know. Roger comes I believe on Sunday. I am alone here with the children now seeing the N.Y. year out & rather full of reminiscences as I have been putting photographs into their books & so looking at others - dating from pre-war days. an amusing but melancholy proceeding.

I daresay you're right as to the comparative merits of Ka & Wh. but she's sunk further

than he has. He was always a miserable little rat pretending to a manly vigour while Ka I suppose had some character. Besides she really knows she's sunk, only she won't face it. I shall be fascinated to hear every detail though nothing on earth, certainly not Cornish beauties, would induce me to go there.

Besides I believe Sussex beauties, at this time of year, are just as great. Even I have been out for one walk, such has been the lure of the winter colour far better than in summer. The only blot on the landscape is Tilton. They're on Monday however. I now (in alone hope I don't much expect to see them – Not that we have seen very much of them, but the thought that one's tenderness is in danger spoils one's whiter existence. I am become very crabbed. However we can work in peace & a good light most of the day.

I hope you will come. But perhaps you won't think it worth while – Julian is very anxious to put it off for 2 days. But I expect he won't & anyhow let me know if & when you can come – would lunch be best? or what?

Yours VW

T. PARSONS 3.273

(144)

Hotel Cendrillon
Cassis. Jan 26

(1927)

My Billy.

I sent you a card from Paris & one today. So you will know that Duncan is safe & well & I can tell you our adventures in their order. Our journeys were all easy as I told you. I saw Julian in Paris & Luca. No one else except Rose Valdoc when I took Julian to see. as he is now anxious to know more French people. He can chatter away very usefully, not very correctly. but quite fast. I was rather worried as I found no news when I arrived but at the end of the morning I was brought the telegram I told you of which was a tremendous relief. We left

Nice & Grasse very much enjoyed my trip with Duncan

Juliet. But he still regrets it. He is very much

(144)

(1927)

Hotel Cendrillon
Cassis. Jan 26

My Billy.

I sent you a card from Paris & one today. So you will know that Duncan is still well & I can tell you our adventures in their order. Our journeys were all easy as I told you. I saw Julian in Paris & Lucie. No one else except Rose Valdrac when I took Julian to see. as he is now anxious to know some French people. He can chatter away very worthy, not very correctly. but quite fast. I was rather worried as I found no news when I arrived but at 8 the next morning I was brought the telegram I told you of which was a tremendous relief. We left

consult. But he, till regrets it. He is very nice & grows on one. I think you will like him. I'll write more fully later.

Paris later than I expected. not till 9.30. so we didn't get to Marseilles till 10.30. half an hour late. Angelica is a perfect traveller. amused & excited by everything. hardly ever tired & never cross. Also she can amuse herself reading whenever she's wanted to. We had only time at Marseilles for a wash & breakfast. & then got into the Cassis train - & at Cassis there was Angus - We just got our luggage out in time. & drove to the hotel where we all had lunch & heard the news. They had decided we had better come here to rent with. as the flat is not quite in order yet & we shall have to get in wood. coal. etc. I was disappointed. but I daresay it's

last. I could not really tell very much about Duncan till I saw him. which we did after lunch. Even then it was difficult to make out all that had happened. but at last I have managed to find out. He has been very well looked after & nursed once they realised how ill he was. but they had no thermometer. The doctor therefore wasn't sent for at all till he'd been ill about a week. when he came he took his temp. but only in the mornings when it was lowest of course. After a few days Theatre let him get up. & it was only by chance when Angus arrived & couldn't get into

the flat (where he is living & which belongs to the doctor) & so had to go & get the key from the Doctor, that he - the doctor - came in the evening by chance to give the key & found out that D's temp. was up to 104. & that he was really very bad. After that I think he was seriously treated but I cannot help feeling it was rather idiotic that no one got an English thermometer & made the doctor take it seriously or even sooner. However I hope he is really convalescent now. He is very weak still but can walk a short way & sit in the sun. He still has pain in the side

which they seem to think the
natural result of bronchitis
& a slight attack of pneumonia
but I hope it will go in a
day or two. Also his
inside isn't really right yet.
However his head is heaps
now for several days - so I
think he ought to get strong
soon. especially as his
appetite is good & he can
eat most things. I hardly
see him alone as there's only
one sitting room at the villa
& Mr Grant. Aunt Daisy. Miss
Elwes & Rogers all sit in it
when I can move & the villa
near by it will be easier
as then I can go in at times
when I know he'll be alone
as it is I went up this
morning & took him for a

they walk a do so saw him for ½ an hour or so. but that is all. There is no use adding to the crowd which he is not really strong enough to stand. I shall be very glad to get to the flat. Here there are English females whom we see but I am capable of resisting - I have already initiated them by sternly refusing to visit & you instead of entering upon conversation with them - also it's a little difficult with a child to get the right sort of meals etc. I hope we may be able to move in a day or two.

I'm afraid I was very tiresome & silly in London Perhaps I lost my sense of proportion & got too uneasy but it was difficult not to & I think I was right in suspecting things were worse than I was allowed to know which always makes one far more uneasy. As usual in a crisis - & in whining life too I long to pretend not to think so - I depended on you & Leonard - I hope you didn't worry after I had gone my Billy - you were the greatest help to me & I left you too many tiresome

thing to do I'm afraid.
You will have to come out here later. Make up your minds to it now. I shall arrange everything for you. It is really absurd not to for the light & sun are even now so astonishing after London & I can see the spring is soon going to burst upon us.
Your letters will be a good deal when they come. Duncan will want extolment very badly in a day or two. Did you know that Lucy has a passionate admiration for you & once you asked him to write to you. but he saw that if he did he had to give up all else & thought only of his correspondence with you. So he

I sent back the cover. My Bruges. I hope it's Villa Corsica better. Cassis. Jan 25

1927

My Billy.

I have had a most mysterious letter from Clive. He says he is coming here on Feb. 13th & means to stay till the end of the Easter holidays & write. He says that he will tell me all about it when we meet. As of course there is a reason other than simply a wish to work. That he is very unhappy. & that he would rather be with me & Duncan than any one else. What does it all mean? I know absolutely nothing. Beyond

Vaghe rumours that he was depressed I have never suspected anything wrong & wonder whether it is Mary or what. Do write & tell me as you know as I don't suppose I shall hear more from him till I see him. Of course I'm quite prepared for the possibility of its all blowing over & his not coming. But it certainly sounds rather serious in his letter. Duncan & I wonder whether Mary has gone off with someone else - or has he fallen very much in love with someone & been refused? But I incline to the first possibility. I expect anyhow he will have told you or you will know

somehow. It looks in any case as if he did not mind leaving Mary for some time. On the other hand the last time I saw him he talked of travelling with her after Easter.

I've had a letter from Rose who says nothing about it. So perhaps it's not generally known yet. But surely it soon must be.

I am now established in this villa & you will have heard all our news from Angus. It's very nice now that water runs from the taps & the kitchen fire burns. We have a French cook & come in the mornings for 4d an hour & wine at 4d a bottle — Life seems very simple. It's

lovely weather & the light is dazzling. If Leonard were here he could sit in the sun on the verandah 8 hours a day & you could go for lovely walks among the olives & vineyards. & Vive got to come. as you know. I have you arranged it? Duncan still looks bedraggled & very thin. But has really getting stronger every day, I think. All Grant & McNeil plans are very vague - they must say what they mean to do. If only they'd so I might be able to book their villa & theirs & we could all inhabit the two. But anyhow there's the Cendrillon, not very far off & quite comfortable.

Please write & tell me about Clive & don't let him think I've asked you. as I'm so much in the dark -

Yours VB

Villa Corsica
Cassis.

?31 Jan 1927

Monday.

My Billy.

I am wondering if I was very indiscreet to write to you as I did - Please don't give me away to Clive or anyone else. I thought you were certain to know all about this mysterious affair then it occurred to me that possibly no one does know yet. If you don't, I hope you won't tell Clive I think I have given him away - or tell anyone else. He may have kept it, whatever it may be, very dark. He certainly heard from me before I came away. If a break with Mary is involved I expect

it cant be kept dark very long. but if its some one else its possible no one may know about it. Its all very intriguing & I hope you can give me news. but anyhow I shall hear when he comes & I dont want to make matters worse by indiscretion. Do please say nothing to him as you have heard anything from me whatever happens.

I had another letter from him today. mostly about Julian, but he says he has taken a sleeper the first date he could get me - that is Feb. 11th.

Have you settled anything about going to America yet. But I know quite so.

I wish I felt as certain that you'll come here.

I have at last begun to establish myself in the studio at the Villa Romola though not to paint yet. But I've been stretching canvases etc.

I wonder if you sent off my clothes. Music books came but nothing else yet. I hope it wasn't a great bother to send them.

Duncan seems very feeble still which I suppose is only to be expected. He has a good deal of pain in his side. But the doctor seems to think it the inevitable result of pneumonia & nothing to worry about.

I really can hardly bring

myself to believe in Sir Herbert's marriage. It seems to me indecent. But I hope you will write to him or somehow find out something about it.

Has your Vita gone? Don't expend all your energies in letter writing on her. I consider I have first claim. When you do write to her you can give her my love & say I'm very sorry I couldn't do a drawing of you to take away with her. But if she will write me when she comes back I will try again.

I am going to Toulon tomorrow to change money & shall consider the neighbourhood with a view to finding rooms for us.

Please write

Yours NB

Villa Corsica
Cassis
Bouches du Rhone

Feb 5

My Billy.

I am most grateful for your letter telling me all about those extraordinary parallels. Really they are a caution. Its all most interesting. You neednt have any fears of my giving you away. Clive said he'd tell me all about it himself when he saw me in his first letter when I heard from him again saying he wasnt coming & again giving no reason except that "he was a nicer character than people generally thought" I wrote to him saying I was completely in the dark & asking him to tell me a little more than these cryptic remarks. Its quite

[sad] little lady in the room was [illegible] medium. [illegible] Reality [illegible] of [illegible] leaving [illegible] Vis

Villa Corsica
Cassis
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I am most grateful for your letter telling me all about those extraordinary parallels. Really they are a caution. Its all most interesting. You needn't have any fears of my giving you away. Clive said he'd tell me all about it himself when he saw me in his first letter when I heard from him again saying he wasn't coming & again giving no reason except that "he was a nicer character than people generally thought" I wrote to him saying I was completely in the dark & asking him to tell me a little more than these cryptic remarks. Its quite

[sort] little lady in the room was living in the Reality Mystical sphere she learning Spiritual Vision

unnecessary therefore for me to tell him now that I do know any more - Probably he will write a little more soon but if not I can ignore the whole thing until I see him when I shall simply ask him what it was all about as if I knew nothing. The only other person I have written to is Rosie. The last time I wrote to him I asked him if he knew anything of these mysterious goings on - That's all -

But I daresay you will get into trouble with the principals One always does. When Clive had his affair with Jeanne Mary blamed me - though I was of course absolutely

miscent I am very beyond
a liking for Duncan -
I expect the kinds of easiest
to put some blame on to you
or me as you say she
can behave like a cook.
The whole affair is very
interesting. My real
opinion is that Clive might
& break it off. I'm
not in the least anxious
for him to form my own
point of view as I never
see her now except for 3
days at Charleston each
summer & I daresay any
other visitors might be
more tiresome. But I
think its quite true that
stops him from working.
She may not mean to or
want to. But she's so strong

really unfitted for anything but a social existence that I don't see how she can help it. I think Clive might now settle down & use his brains a bit. He has quite good ones & might do many things well worth doing. He should have love affairs of a milder kind which needn't interfere with work & I believe he'd be much happier. I have thought for some time that there were difficulties between him & Mary & I think as soon as the causes of them so much physical effect on him he'll feel hopelessly bored. But I don't suppose he will get rid of her she's much more determined

than he is & has already 2.
some (tho' even greater
crises & succeeded in getting
him back. Perhaps it's
as well (in sht of the
country as I daresay I
should get even more em-
broiled than ever & be more
suspected of plots & get
rid of her. In fact I
could hardly behave accord-
ing to the dictates of my own
reason without being so.
As it is I hope to be kept
up to date by you for you
can imagine how Duncan
& I suck your letters dry
& what intense amusement
& pleasure they give. I
wish my poor old habit of
a daily letter still existed.
I daresay (like went in the

end come here at all - or
at most only for a week
or two before spring. Many
as he meant it originally.
But I never rely on his
plans.

Shall you really come here
& not go to America I wonder.
I can't help literally quite
like it, I hope it rash to
expect anyone else to like
what one likes myself.
Duncan & I play with the
idea of buying a house here,
but we shant really do so.
We went one day to a most
attractive farm with a deep
well down which one looked
(fields) of narcissus & primroses
& vineyards & considered how
we could add a studio. But

its not for sale. We do seriously think however of buying or taking rooms or studios - or something we could come to at times. for from my point of view it seems too absurd not to. Painting is a different thing here from what it can be in the winter in England. Its never dark, even when the sky is grey. The light in the Penrose studio is perfect. & even now one could often work out of doors. if one wanted to. It makes so much difference to one one can't suddenly be held up in the middle of something by fog or darkness. Also the beauty is a constant delight. The people are very friendly & helpful. &

living is very cheap. I had my first household books today: 2 cloths washing 2 my Darleys wages & all they came to just about £3. One will have no fees or light to pay in addition of course - only a comparatively small amount for coal & wood. Wear a small household of course - only myself. Grace & Angelica but still I can't do it as cheaply as that in England. No doubt we could do it more cheaply still if one took trouble to - so far I have only set what seemed necessary or desirable. But I don't know whether we can find anything or what we shall do really. only it seems more

I were ridiculous for painters to spend half their lives in the dark.

Do let me know as soon as you can whether you will really come here. I believe the Grant McNeil party will leave at the end of this month. I rather think that I shall then move if possible to the Pensione villa. so as to have the studio. Also the rooms are nicer. But as this villa's rent is only 150 fr. a week. about £1.5.0. it might be left. If you or Clive or anyone else would like it to keep this for. You could stay here as I do, with a daily. It's much nicer I think than being in a hotel. also cheaper. I you need

not see any of the dirty
inhabitants. Quite in the
country & near lovely
walks. Also, which may
appeal to Leonard, you
have a verandah with
hot sun all day. I
suppose however if its the
Rep- on I must have to
tell the owners before we
work here comes to an end.

I suppose you haven't
given any time or attention
to a story for me to do
drawings for? I could
really do them here, as
nearly all my evenings are
solitary. I don't often go
to the Ministas in the
evening. as I am afraid
of being a Keynes to them

Charleston. I go down & work in the studio. Now I'm alone with Duncan. By day. But I always come back here for tea with Angelica & spend my evenings alone (that's why you have to put up with such long letters) So you see I have many hours which I could devote to trying to turn a penny or two.

While I remember it, your parcel has come. At least there's one at the station which I think must be yours. I'm very thankful for it as Angelica's under clothes are really disgusting.

Have you seen Lydia's show at Heffers by Roger & Porter. You must go. & tell

me what its like. Also if they set up a show of my works at our room in Bond St soon with you give me your criticisms - but it will only be of unpretentious sketches if that is me -

Is Bunyes back all right & the letter for his holiday.. which wasn't as successful as it might have been with Duncan ill.

Duncan has taken great strides the last few days & really seems practically well again. He can walk & do all much as usual & looks much better & is in very good spirits. Angelica is very happy & getting quite fond - She spends all her days not except for a daily hour learning French with a very

T. PARSONS 3.2.23